Production of Nutmeg

3481. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the production of nutmeg during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) whether the production of nutmeg is adequate to meet the domestic demand in the country; and

(c) if not, the steps taken by the government to increase the production of nutmeg by encouraging the cultivators?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Official statistics of production of Nutmeg in the country are not available. Rough estimates of production for three years are given below:-

States	*Production (Tonnes)*		
	1987-88	*1988-89*	*1989-90*
Kerala	2385	2596	2768
Karnataka	64	65	67
Tamil Nadu	15	20	25

(b) No, Sir. Small quantities of nutmeg are imported every year to bridge the gap between the domestic production and demand..

(c) The following schemes are being implemented for encouraging the cultivation of Nutmeg:-

i) Quality planting material is produced and distributed to farmers at 50% subsidy on cost of seedlings.

ii) Subsidy at 25% of the cost or Rs. 3000/- per irrigation unit, which ever is less is provided to Nutmeg farmers.

iii) A 5 hectare progeny orchard for production of quality seed material has been established in Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Fourth Round of Bidding for oil exploration

3482. SHRI RAM NAIK: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are considering for holding the fourth round of bidding for oil exploration;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of the bids held earlier, the countries which participated along with the results of each bid?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR): (a) and (b).